

First Certificate in English Practice Tests

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Cambridge *English Language Learning*

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Contents

To the student	I
Practice Test 1	2
Practice Test 2	20
Practice Test 3	37
Practice Test 4	54
Practice Test 5	72
Answer Sheet	89

To the student

This book is for candidates preparing for the University of Cambridge First Certificate in English examination and provides practice in all the written and oral papers.

The examination consists of 5 papers, as follows:

Paper 1: Reading Comprehension (1¼ hours)

Section A consists of 40 multiple-choice items in the form of a sentence with a blank to be filled by one of five words or phrases below.

Section B consists of 20 multiple-choice items based on passages of between 250 and 600 words.

Paper 2: Composition (2 hours)

There are five topics from which you choose three. Each composition must be between 120 and 180 words in length.

Paper 3: Use of English (2 hours)

Section A contains exercises which test your control of English usage and grammatical structure.

Section B is a directed writing exercise where you extract information from a text and present it in a coherent form.

Paper 4: Listening Comprehension (approx. 30 minutes)

You answer 5 multiple-choice items on each of three passages.

Paper 5: Interview (approx. 10 minutes)

Section A You look at a photograph for a few minutes, and then you are asked some specific questions on it before leading on to general topics.

Section B You are asked to read part of a dialogue aloud.

Section C You are asked to respond to three situations.

For Papers 1 and 4 you will need an answer sheet similar to the one at the back of this book. The FCE/CPE Answer Pad, published by Cambridge University Press, is available for this purpose.

Practice Test 1

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH

PAPER 1: READING COMPREHENSION

1½ hours

Answer all questions. Indicate your choice of answer in every case on the answer sheet. Follow carefully the instructions about how to record your answers.

Section A

In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence. On your answer sheet, indicate the letter A, B, C, D or E against the number of each item 1-40 for the word or phrase you choose. Give one answer only to each question.

- 1 Apart from those three very cold weeks in January, it has been a very _____ winter.
A plain B soft C pale D mild E calm
- 2 The best student in each class will _____ a prize at the end of term.
A catch B receive C possess D prove E reward
- 3 There is real concern that food supplies will not be _____ to feed the increasing world population.
A sufficient B satisfactory C equal D measured E effective
- 4 The police _____ her for helping the murderer to escape.
A caught B prevented C searched D brought E arrested
- 5 The children will not be allowed to come with us if they don't _____ themselves better.
A direct B accustom C behave D declare E compose
- 6 I'll have to _____ to you, otherwise he will hear.
A shout B show C say D whistle E whisper
- 7 You must obtain _____ from the landowner to fish in this river.
A permit B freedom C permission D right E allowance
- 8 We were lucky to get tickets for the first _____ of the new opera.
A publication B time C action D act E performance
- 9 Mr and Mrs Green _____ a party for their daughter's twenty-first birthday.
A invited B laid C formed D gave E called
- 10 The local tourist bureau will send you _____ about hotels in the area.
A knowledge B information C news D notice E advertisement
- 11 If present dissatisfaction over salaries continues the _____ result will be loss of staff.
A next B lengthy C near D final E far
- 12 I shall never manage to beat John at tennis; we are clearly not in the same _____.
A set B band C group D class E order

Practice Test 1

- 13 Since his retirement, Peter Smith, who was _____ a teacher, has written four novels.
A afterwards B usually C presently D already E formerly
- 14 The use of plastics for shoes _____ of leather has ruined shoe repairing as a business.
A although B as well C else D instead E outside
- 15 Her husband felt it would be silly to _____ the colour of the curtains before they had painted the room.
A change B find C choose D lose E charge
- 16 The _____ of ice-cream sold increases sharply in the summer months.
A account B amount C count D number E size
- 17 Two of the children have to sleep in one bed, but the other three have _____ ones.
A complete B singular C separate D different E lonely
- 18 If your bicycle _____ comes off, it is almost impossible to put it back on without getting oil on your hands.
A ring B belt C steel D chain E machine
- 19 It will _____ time if we make the sandwiches the day before the picnic.
A earn B spare C lower D save E win
- 20 I haven't got enough string to _____ up this parcel.
A stick B fold C close D shut E tie
- 21 Bill doesn't _____ what people say about him.
A concern B care C matter D disturb E depend
- 22 Although the false banknotes fooled many people, they did not _____ to close examination.
A keep up B put up C stand up D pay up E look up
- 23 It was a long time before the cut on my hand _____ completely.
A healed B sank C improved D repaired E settled
- 24 She heated the chocolate until it _____, then poured it over the cake.
A formed B melted C changed D floated E flooded
- 25 There's no need to be frightened of the dog, he's quite _____.
A happy B eager C weak D cheerful E harmless
- 26 What he described as a _____ detail I thought was the most important part of the plan.
A common B plain C just D mere E flat
- 27 She asked me to _____ my name and address in capital letters so that they could be read more easily.
A clear B detail C print D mark E describe
- 28 We got three seats in the front _____ of the theatre.
A row B passage C line D bench E queue
- 29 The gloves were really too small, and it was only by _____ them that I managed to get them on.
A spreading B bending C urging D squeezing E stretching
- 30 When I bent down to tie my shoelace, the seat of my trousers _____.
A broke B split C cracked D holed E snapped
- 31 He hit the other boxer so hard that he broke his lower _____.
A chin B wrist C throat D shoulder E jaw
- 32 I cannot undo the _____ in this piece of string.
A bunch B lock C spot D knot E tie
- 33 _____ of money prevented us from taking a holiday this year.
A limit B freeze C emptiness D expense E lack
- 34 This blue flower is known by _____ names in other parts of England.
A severe B difference C various D separate E usual

- 35 Why can't you do this small _____ for me? I've helped you often enough in the past.
A command B demand C effort D favour E influence
- 36 When there was a short _____ in the conversation, I asked if anyone would like anything to drink.
A fall B blank C wait D pause E place
- 37 That shop doesn't have any brown sugar in _____ at the moment, but they expect to have some tomorrow.
A keep B stock C sale D demand E trade
- 38 While I am on holiday, ring me at my hotel only if there are any _____ messages for me.
A urgent B hasty C valuable D early E confident
- 39 This _____ is not big enough to cut down a tree.
A axe B hammer C screw D knife E spade
- 40 He must give us more time, _____ we shall not be able to make a good job of it.
A whether B otherwise C consequently D therefore E doubtless

Section B

In this section you will find after each of the passages a number of questions or unfinished statements about the passage, each with four suggested answers or ways of finishing. You must choose the one which you think fits best. **On your answer sheet**, indicate the letter A, B, C or D against the number of each item 41 to 60 for the answer you choose. Give **one answer only** to each question. Read each passage right through before choosing your answers.

First passage

The headmaster, whose name was Angusthorpe, discovered when he arrived at the Slieve Gashal Hotel that a death had occurred. It had become the custom of Mr Angusthorpe to book his fortnight's holiday by saying simply to Mr Doyle: 'Till next year then,' a remark that Mr Doyle would understand as a booking, reserving the same room for the headmaster and his wife in twelve months' time. No letters changed hands during the year, no confirmation of the booking was ever necessary: Mr Angusthorpe and his wife arrived each summer after the trials of the school term, knowing that their room would be waiting for them, with flowers in a vase in the window, and Mr Doyle full of welcome in the hall. 'He died in Woolworth's in Galway,' said Mr Doyle's son in the summer of 1968. 'He was buying a shirt at the time.'

Afterwards, Mr Angusthorpe said to his wife that when Mr Doyle's son spoke those words he knew that nothing was ever going to be the same again. Mr Doyle's son went on speaking while the headmaster and his small grey-haired wife stood in the hall. He told them that he had become the owner of the Slieve Gashal on the death of his father and that all his adult life he had been employed in the accounts department of a paper-mill in Dublin. 'I thought at first I'd sell the place up,' he informed the Angusthorpes, 'and then I thought maybe I'd attempt to make a success of it. "Shall we have a shot at it?" I said to the wife, and God bless her she said why shouldn't I?' While he spoke, the subject of his last remarks appeared behind him in the hall, a woman whose appearance did not make a good impression on Mr Angusthorpe. She was pale-faced and fat. She stood silently by her husband, whose appearance did not impress Mr Angusthorpe either, since the new owner of the Slieve Gashal, a man with shaking hands and a black moustache, did not appear to have shaved himself that day. 'One or other of them, if not both,' said Mr Angusthorpe afterwards, 'smelt of drink.'

The Angusthorpes were led to their room by a girl whose age Mr Angusthorpe guessed to be about thirteen. 'What's become of Joseph?' he asked as they mounted the stairs, referring to an old porter who had always in the past been so clean and tidy in a uniform, but the child seemed not to understand the question, for she offered it no reply. In the room there were no flowers, and although they had entered by a door that was familiar to them, the room itself was greatly changed: it was, to begin with, only half the size it had been before. 'Great heavens!' cried Mr Angusthorpe, striking the wall with his fist and finding it to be wooden. 'He had the workmen in,' the child said.

Mr Angusthorpe, who was naturally furious, descended the stairs and shouted in the hall. 'Mr Doyle!' he called out in his headmaster's voice. 'Mr Doyle! Mr Doyle!' 'Our room,' protested Mr Angusthorpe. 'We can't possibly sleep in a tiny place like that.'

- 41 When did old Mr Doyle die?
 - A When Mr Angusthorpe arrived at the hotel
 - B Before Mr Angusthorpe booked his 1968 holiday
 - C Before Mr Angusthorpe's 1968 holiday
 - D When his son was shopping
- 42 Mr Angusthorpe made sure that he had a room at the hotel by
 - A wishing Mr Doyle good-bye for a year
 - B writing just before he came, but not during the year
 - C arriving just after the school trials
 - D confirming the reservation if it was necessary
- 43 What happened when old Mr Doyle died?
 - A The hotel became a success
 - B The hotel stayed in the family
 - C His son got a job in a paper-mill
 - D His son sold the hotel
- 44 When Mrs Doyle said 'Why shouldn't you?' she was encouraging her husband to
 - A work in an accounts department
 - B sell the hotel
 - C take over the hotel
 - D sell the paper-mill
- 45 Who appears to be the most talkative person?
 - A The headmaster
 - B The young girl
 - C Mr Doyle
 - D Mrs Doyle
- 46 The Angusthorpes were received in 1968
 - A with great respect
 - B as if they were old friends
 - C in fear and trembling
 - D in a way they were not used to
- 47 What did Mr Angusthorpe want to know about Joseph?
 - A Whether he was still clean and tidy
 - B Why he had stayed downstairs
 - C Why he always used to be so clean and tidy
 - D Whether he was still the porter
- 48 What was the matter with the Angusthorpes' room?
 - A It was being made smaller
 - B It had to be entered by a new door
 - C It had been divided
 - D It had been used by the workmen
- 49 When he hit the wall, Mr Angusthorpe discovered that
 - A the workmen were in the next room
 - B the wall was made of wood
 - C it could not be broken down
 - D he had not enough room to turn round
- 50 Mr Angusthorpe went downstairs to tell Mr Doyle that
 - A his room was too small
 - B he could not sleep
 - C he wanted Joseph's help
 - D the workmen were in his room

Second passage

'You are Miss Dawney, aren't you?' Miss Brimley asked the girl.

'Lord, no. I'm a sort of helper. Miss Dawney's gone to the Customs House—she'll be back at tea time if you want to see her.'

'Goodness, my dear, I'm sure I shan't keep you two minutes. A friend of mine who lives in Carne gave an old grey dress to the people who collect for the refugees last Thursday and now she's sure she left her jewelled pin on the dress. I'm sure she hasn't done anything of the sort, mind you, but she rang me yesterday morning in a dreadful state and made me promise to come round at once and ask. I couldn't come yesterday, unfortunately—tied to my desk from morning till night. But I gather you're a bit behind, so it won't be too late?'

'Lord, no! We're miles behind. That's all the stuff downstairs, waiting to be unpacked and sorted. It comes from the representatives at each school—sometimes boys and sometimes staff—and they put all the clothes together and send them up in big parcels, either by train or ordinary mail. We sort them here before sending them abroad.'

'That's what I gathered from Jane. As soon as she realized she'd made this mistake she got hold of the woman doing the collecting and sending, but of course it was too late. The parcel had gone.'

'Oh dear! Do you know when the parcel was sent off?'

'Yes. On Friday morning.'

'From Carne? Train or post?'

Hurrying past Miss Brimley, the girl searched among the pile of papers on her desk and finally produced a stiff-backed exercise book. Opening it, she looked quickly through the pages in an anxious sort of way.

'Wouldn't have arrived till yesterday at the earliest,' she said. 'We certainly won't have opened it yet. Honestly, I don't know how we shall ever manage, and with the holidays coming we shall just get worse and worse. On top of that, half our stuff is held up at the Customs House—hullo, here we are!' She pushed the book over to Miss Brimley, pointing to an entry: Carne, parcel post, 27 lb.

'I wonder,' said Miss Brimley, 'whether you'd mind if we had a quick look inside?'

They went downstairs to the hall.

'How do you know where they come from if you can't read the postmark?' asked Miss Brimley as the girl began to search among the parcels.

'We give representatives printed labels for the parcels. They have the numbers on. You see, we simply can't allow letters. It would be too difficult. When we get a parcel all we have to do is send off a printed card thanking them for it. People who aren't representatives won't send parcels to this address you see—they'll send to the advertised address in Belgrave Square.'

'Does the system work?'

'No,' replied the girl, 'it doesn't. The representatives either forget to use our labels or they run out and can't be bothered to tell us. Ten days later they ring up in a rage because they haven't heard from us. Representatives change too, without letting us know. Sometimes the boys will suddenly decide to go it themselves, and no one tells them the way to go about it.'

'I see,' said Miss Brimley.

- 51 How does Miss Brimley explain her visit to the office?
- A Her friend has remembered her old grey dress
 - B Her friend has lost something
 - C Her friend has sent the wrong dress to the office
 - D Miss Brimley promised Miss Dawney she would come
- 52 What do the representatives do?
- A They give the clothes to poor children
 - B They help the girl to sort out clothes
 - C They send clothes from the schools to the office
 - D They collect all the clothes and send them abroad

Practice Test 1

- 53 What did Jane do first when she discovered the mistake?
A She spoke to the representative
B She went to the post office
C She wrote to the girl's office
D She telephoned Miss Brimley
- 54 Why does the girl look in the book?
A To discover if the parcel has been sent abroad
B To discover if the parcel has arrived
C To discover how much the parcel weighs
D To discover if the parcel has been opened
- 55 Miss Brimley asks to look in
A the exercise book
B the parcel from Carne
C the Customs House
D the hall down below
- 56 How does the girl deal with Miss Brimley's problem? She is
A polite but uninterested
B impatient and annoyed
C worried but unhelpful
D friendly and concerned
- 57 The number on the ticket shows
A what the weight of the parcel is
B whether the parcel was sent by post or train
C which school the parcel was sent from
D how many parcels were sent together
- 58 What does the girl complain about?
A There is too much to do
B There are too few clothes
C Her holidays are too short
D The post is far too slow
- 59 Why does the system not work?
A The representatives are too young
B People lose their tempers easily
C Not enough tickets are printed
D Office directions are not followed
- 60 How does the girl talk about the system?
A She is unwilling to discuss it
B She appears completely honest
C She tries to hide its weaknesses
D She appears not to understand it

PAPER 2: COMPOSITION

2 hours

Write **three only** of the following composition exercises. Your answers must follow exactly the instructions given, and must be of between 120 and 180 words each.

1. You have gone to a new job in another town. Write a letter to a friend describing the work you are doing and the place in which you are living. You should make the beginning and ending like those of an ordinary letter, but the address is not to be counted in the number of words.

2. You are trying to sell some furniture, and someone has phoned you about it. Write the conversation which takes place between you. Write in dialogue form, giving only the name of each speaker followed by his or her words.

3. Describe the appearance of two people whom you regularly see together and about whom you are curious because they are so different from each other.

4. Big cities and also the countryside are becoming dirtier. What do you think could be done about this?

5. Write the entries for **three days** of a diary, your own or someone else's, including a day on which several things went wrong.

PAPER 3: USE OF ENGLISH

2 hours

Answer all the questions.

SECTION A

1. Fill each of the numbered blanks in the following passage. Use only **one** word in each space.

Edward was _____ (1) his way to meet Mary, _____ (2) home was in the small country town of Melchester just outside which he lived. They _____ (3) to meet there at 7.30, and as he walked _____ (4) the town, Edward was looking forward to _____ (5) the evening with the girl he had _____ (6) in love with for nearly a month.

A cyclist shouted to him as he passed, "Watch out! There's a herd of cows blocking the way just _____ (7) the next corner."

Edward was afraid _____ (8) cows, and decided to turn back and wait. He stepped in the middle of the road, but didn't notice a car racing _____ (9) him.

The car knocked him _____ (10) and he _____ (11) unconscious to the ground. The driver was most upset and said to himself crossly, "If _____ (12) he had been looking where he was going!" He ran to a telephone box, which luckily was just _____ (13), to call an ambulance.

Edward had cut _____ (14) head but _____ (15) seemed unharmed. Thinking about it later as he lay recovering in hospital, he told _____ (16) he wouldn't _____ (17) be so careless _____ (18). He would stay alert, however much in love, and not go about _____ (19) his head in the _____ (20).

Practice Test 1

2. Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it means exactly the same as the sentence printed before it.

Example: It took me an hour to get here today.

Answer: I spent an hour getting here today

Jane lives near here.

1. Jane lives not

Please explain that notice to me.

2. Please tell me

George was late, so we didn't go to the cinema.

3. If George hadn't

That's the office he works in.

4. That's the office where

Mrs Jones invited her guest to have a cup of tea.

5. "Would you

The windows should be cleaned.

6. The windows need

It's warmer than it was.

7. It's not

When the accident happened, 50,000 people were watching the match.

8. The match was

He plays the guitar better than I do.

9. I

They still haven't done the work.

10. The work

Practice Test 1

3. Write out the following passage in dialogue form, making all necessary changes. Begin as shown :

Miss Smith reminded her class that they were going on a country walk the next morning. On checking, she found that Gwendolen, as she had rather expected, was not sure of the time and place for them all to meet, so she repeated the necessary information (9.30 at the Bus Station) before letting the class go. She also reminded them about the need to bring a hot drink and sandwiches, and to wear warm clothes and thick boots.

Gwendolen stayed behind, to ask if the work they had been doing would have to be finished that evening. Miss Smith recommended this very strongly and a little impatiently, pointing out that there certainly wouldn't be time before they went out. She then went on to find out if Gwendolen had a map, and if she could understand it.

Poor Gwendolen admitted that this was just what was worrying her most: she couldn't even make out where the school was, let alone all the rivers and bridges they had been studying.

Miss Smith: Now don't forget, everyone, that

II

Practice Test 1

4. The word in capitals at the end of each of the following sentences can be used to form a word that fits suitably in the blank space. Fill each blank in this way.

Examples:

He said "Good morning" in a most friendly way. **FRIEND**

My teacher encouraged me to take the examination. **COURAGE**

1. He showed much _____ in giving help to those in need. **GENEROUS**

2. He was so rude to her that she told her friends how _____ he had behaved. **POLITE**

3. Fruit is always _____ in summer. **PLENTY**

4. The soldier showed much _____ in saving his friend. **BRAVE**

5. Although much is done to supply enough for everyone, _____ of food will long be a world problem. **SHORT**

6. The circus is always a big _____ for children. **ATTRACT**

7. The sound of happy _____ showed how much they were enjoying the party. **LAUGH**

8. The visitors gazed in _____ at the toys. **ADMIRE**

9. He was so _____ by the play that he fell asleep. **BORE**

10. _____ he failed his driving test. **FORTUNE**

SECTION B

5. In the following conversation, Jim and John discuss the best way to travel. Using only the information contained in the conversation, write one paragraph on why the journey they are talking about is best not made by car, and another paragraph saying in what ways the train would be more convenient. You will probably need between 80 and 100 words for each paragraph, which must be written in the spaces provided. The beginning of each paragraph has been written for you.

John: I'm thinking of going up to Scotland at the end of December, but I've only got a few days' holiday. What do you think would be the best way of getting there? After all it's 300 miles from here.

Jim: Well, I wouldn't go by car, if I were you. It's pretty dangerous if the roads are icy, and the motorways will be very crowded over the holiday.

John: That won't worry me in my fast new sports car. I'll be able to overtake anyone on the roads, quite safely.

Jim: But on public holidays you'll have to go slowly, because there won't be room to pass. Most of the traffic will not want to travel as fast as you.

John: But it's such a powerful car. You can overtake in a few seconds, and use every opportunity.

Jim: That's just where the danger lies. If a slower driver does something unexpected at the last moment, you have no time to put your brakes on.

John: Well, couldn't I use the smaller roads? You see more of the countryside that way in any case.

Jim: I suppose so, but they're often very narrow and winding. That can be dangerous too.

John: True enough. It's time something was done to improve them. Five or six motorways are the only good roads we have.

Jim: But the government only looks after the motorways. The local authorities have to pay for the smaller roads. And that means, of course, no big spending. Country people don't want to pay a lot of money for roads.

John: So I've heard. I suppose they feel people driving faster would make their villages more dangerous.

Jim: Exactly. So why don't you try the railways for a change. It hardly takes six hours to get to Edinburgh these days.

John: Haven't the fares gone up a lot recently?

Jim: Well, hasn't petrol too? Anyway, the train's much more comfortable.

John: But what about sight-seeing. You can't stop the train and get out and visit a cathedral, can you?

Jim: No, you can't, but you can have some fantastic views from the train window. And you don't have to watch the other traffic when you're in a train. You can sit back and enjoy the scenery.

John: All right, but what about food? At least you have a choice of restaurants when you're on the road.

Jim: Not so important. Railway meals are improving all the time and they have a choice of dishes on the menu now. Also you don't have to worry about parking the car!

John: Parking the car! That reminds me, if I did take the car up to Edinburgh, I'd still have to find somewhere to park it every night. Perhaps I shall take the train after all.

Paragraph 1: *Going by car is not the best way of going to Scotland for the New Year holiday.*

[illegible]

Paragraph 2: *Going by train has a number of advantages.....*

[illegible]